

WASHINGTON STATE Main Street NEWS

Special Bulletin

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Washington State
Main Street Program
(WSMSP)

The Main Street Approach™

Many of Washington's communities, like thousands of communities across the country, are using the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Approach™ to comprehensively address the complex issues facing their older traditional commercial districts. This approach provides a flexible framework that puts assets, such as unique architecture and locally-owned businesses, to work as a catalyst for economic growth and community pride.

Organization builds consensus and cooperation between the many individuals and groups who have a role in the revitalization process.

Promotion creates excitement. It reinforces and markets a positive image to local citizens, customers, potential investors, new businesses, and visitors based on the special attributes of a district.

Design enhances the unique visual qualities of a district while preserving its historic features.

Economic Restructuring strengthens the district's existing economic assets while finding ways to further develop its market potential.

Main Street™ relies on eight guiding principles:

1. Comprehensive. A single project cannot revitalize a downtown or neighborhood commercial district. An ongoing series of

initiatives is vital to build community support and create lasting progress.

2. Incremental. Small projects make a big difference. They demonstrate "things are happening" in the district and hone the skills and confidence a program needs to tackle more complex projects.

3. Self-Help. The State can provide valuable direction and technical assistance, but only local leadership can breed long-term success by fostering community involvement and commitment in the effort.

4. Public/Private Partnership. Every local revitalization program needs the support and expertise of both the public and private sectors. For an effective partnership, each must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the other.

5. Identifying and Capitalizing on Existing Assets. Unique offerings and local assets provide the solid foundation for a successful revitalization initiative.

6. Quality. From storefront design to promotional campaigns and special events, quality must be instilled in the program.

7. Change. Changing community attitudes and habits is essential for a commercial district renaissance. A carefully planned program helps shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain a revitalization effort.

8. Action Oriented. Frequent visible changes in the look and feel of the district will reinforce the perception of positive change. Small, but dramatic, improvements early on will remind the community that revitalization is underway.

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The WSMSP and the "Tier System" Network

For more information, please check out the state Main Street Program's website at www.downtown.wa.gov or the National Trust Main Street Center website at www.mainstreet.org.

The Washington State Main Street Program (WSMSP) helps communities throughout the state revitalize the economy, appearance, and image of their traditional business districts using a range of services and assistance to meet the needs of communities interested in revitalization.

From the basics of Main Street™ to advanced downtown development topics, regular training opportunities are provided. This includes the annual statewide Downtown Revitalization Training Institute, a multi-day comprehensive training program with a 20-year history.

The WSMSP also serves as a resource center with information and examples compiled from communities throughout the state and the nation. Staff respond to hundreds of questions yearly on subjects ranging from promotions to parking lots to the new Main Street tax credit incentive program.

Staff also help communities launch revitalization efforts and tackle more complicated issues and projects. Services are provided through a tiered system and increase as a community's commitment and ability to move forward with a comprehensive downtown revitalization strategy increases.

The **AFFILIATE LEVEL** is ideal for communities just beginning to explore downtown revitalization, those that do not want full Main Street™ designation, or wish to use the Main Street Approach™ in a non-traditional commercial setting. Affiliate communities have access to the Downtown Revitalization Resource Library and information exchange, telephone consultations, limited technical

assistance, awards program, and a discount to various training events. Communities of all sizes are eligible to participate as an Affiliate and may join at any time by completing a brief application.

The **START-UP LEVEL** is for communities exploring the possibility of future Main Street designation. Services at this level help communities build an appropriate organization and funding base to start a comprehensive program, as well as help prepare them for the Main Street application process. Participation does not guarantee selection as a designated Main Street community, but it can help strengthen local revitalization efforts. Services are provided for a two-year period. Application rounds are held as resources permit.

The **MAIN STREET DESIGNATION LEVEL** is for communities that have a population of less than 100,000, or for neighborhood commercial districts, with a high degree of commitment and readiness towards using the Main Street Approach in a traditional downtown setting. A full-range of assistance is provided to communities at this level, from intensive services to meet the needs of newly designated communities to services that help mature programs maintain focus and effectiveness. Designated Main Street™ programs work to develop the critical tools needed to undertake comprehensive downtown revitalization. Application rounds are held as resources permit.

The WSMSP is a partner, but true revitalization success is built squarely on local commitment, initiative, and follow-through.

For additional information, contact Susan Kempf at 360-725-4056.

Downtown Revitalization is Economic Development

"Economic Development is a process of innovation that increases the capacity of individuals and organizations to produce goods and services and thereby create wealth. This, in turn, can lead to jobs, income, and a tax base for communities, states, and regions."

From the [Higher Education - Economic Development Connection](#) published by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in agreement with the Economic Development Administration.

How does downtown revitalization fit this definition?

- Downtown revitalization creates jobs and puts people to work.
- Downtown revitalization attracts new businesses and encourages entrepreneurship.
- New and expanding downtown businesses generate increased sales tax.
- Downtown development offers local investment opportunities.
- Many downtown businesses attract tourists and a restored historic downtown acts as a tourist destination.
- Downtown festivals and special events attract outside people and outside dollars.
- The downtown can act as a regional shopping district, pulling in shoppers from a radius beyond the city limits.
- A healthy downtown attracts industrial businesses.
- Many downtown businesses (manufacturing and service) attract export dollars to the community.
- Downtowns are typically dominated by local businesses. Profits generated by

these businesses typically circulate within the local economy. Profits from chain stores are often transferred to corporate headquarters.

- New downtown businesses may "plug" the leakage of dollars spent at retail businesses outside of the community.
- New housing can be generated downtown thereby helping to keep the labor force in town.

Why is downtown's role in the economic development process important?

- Shift from a labor intensive economy to a technology intensive economy.
- Shift from a goods producing economy to a service producing economy.
- Shift from national to global economy.
- Small businesses are playing a greater role in our economy.
- Emphasis on compact development is growing.
- Downtown is once again seen as a mixed-use development opportunity.

Main Street™ Stats:

In 2005 alone, the nine certified Main Street™ communities in our state have seen incredible increases in downtown reinvestment by the private sector including: 235 acquisitions, expansions, and new businesses; 746 new jobs; 141 buildings rehabilitated; and \$26,362,294 in building rehabilitation and construction.

Main Street™ Cities

New Jobs, Businesses, & Rehabilitation Investment by Downtown Areas

City	Reporting Period		Acquisitions, Expansions, & New Businesses	New Jobs	Building Rehabs	Rehab Investment	Business Failures & Reloc. Out	Jobs Lost	Net Jobs
	Begins	Ends							
Auburn *	10/1/91	12/31/05	378	1418	349	39,786,717	219	645	773
Bainbridge Isl.	10/1/98	12/31/05	161	483	89	17,017,033	67	230	253
Kennewick	4/1/03	12/31/05	27	105	22	8,766,868	15	34	71
Kent	10/1/93	12/31/05	355	1186	168	46,443,400	86	214	972
Port Angeles *	8/1/91	12/31/05	376	991	217	16,882,844	162	413	578
Port Townsend	8/1/91	12/31/05	207	482	151	14,738,723	92	202	280
Puyallup	3/1/92	12/31/05	221	599	114	35,108,363	81	244	355
Walla Walla	3/1/92	12/31/05	351	1381	420	66,010,278	126	644	737
Wenatchee	5/1/92	12/31/05	326	1099	239	21,569,071	141	481	618
Inactive Towns (7) *			594	2251	340	82,417,508	205	644	1607
TOTALS			2996	9995	2109	348,740,805	1194	3751	6244

* Numbers incomplete

Tier System Network

Main Street™ Designation Level: Auburn Downtown Assn., Bainbridge Island Downtown Assn., Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership, Kent Downtown Partnership, Port Angeles Downtown Assn., Port Townsend Main Street Program, Puyallup Main Street Assn., Downtown Walla Walla Foundation, Wenatchee Downtown Assn. **Start-Up Level:** We anticipate taking applications in the fall of 2006. **Affiliate Level:** City of Aberdeen, City of Airway Heights, Algona Economic Development Corp, Anacortes Chamber of Commerce, City of Arlington, Bellingham's Downtown Renaissance Network, City of Blaine, Downtown Bremerton Assn., Discover Burien, City of Burien, City of Burlington, City of Castle Rock, Town of Cathlamet, City of Centralia, City of Chehalis, Historic Downtown Chelan Assn., Cheney Pathways To Progress, City of Chewelah, Friends of Park & Rec in Asotin County, Cle Elum Downtown Assn., Tri-County EDD, City of Connell, Town of Creston, City of Duvall, City of Edmonds, Ellensburg Downtown Assn., Snohomish County EDC, City of Ferndale, City of Forks, Friends of Freeland, City of Goldendale, Council for Historic Downtown Issaquah, City of Kelso, Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce, City of Kent, City of Kettle Falls, Kirkland Downtown Association, City of Lake Stevens, City of Longview, Longview Downtowners, Lynden Chamber of Commerce, City of Medical Lake, City of Monroe, City of Morton, Moses Lake Business Assn., City of Mount Vernon, City of Newcastle, City of North Bonneville, City of Okanogan, City of Olympia, Olympia Downtown Assn., City of Omak, City of Othello, Palouse EDC, Pasco Downtown Development Assn., City of Pateros, City of Port Orchard, Prosser Economic Development Assn., City of Raymond, City of Redmond, City of Renton, Ritzville Downtown Development Assn., Roslyn Revitalization, Downtown Seattle Assn., Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, Historic Downtown Snohomish, City of Snoqualmie, City of Soap Lake, City of Spokane, City of Sprague, Town of Springdale, City of Stanwood, Southwest King County Chamber, City of Sultan, City of Sumas, Sunnyside EDA, City of Tacoma, Tacoma Neighborhood Districts: Fern Hill, Portland Avenue, Old Town, Stadium, Proctor, and Upper Tacoma, Town of Twisp, Vancouver's Downtown Assn., West Seattle Junction Assn., White Center CDA, Town of Wilbur, Wilbur Chamber of Commerce, Willapa Community Development Assn., Downtown Woodland Revitalization, City of Yakima